

**Health Insurance Exchange Planning Grant -- Planning Committee Meeting
Minutes -- April 28, 2011**

Members Present: Jeannette DeJesús, CT Department of Public Health (DPH); Tia Cintron, CT Office of Policy and Management (OPM); Olga Armah, DPH; Tim Meyer and Candid Krebs for Susan Tully Abdo, Aetna; Jim Augur, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield; Phil Boyle, HCG Services; Mary Ellen Breault, Connecticut Insurance Department (CID); Steve Casey, CT Department of Information Technology (DOIT); Jamesina Henderson, Cornell Scott-Hill Health Corporation; Paul Lombardo, (CID); Kimberly Martone, DPH; Stan McMillen, CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD); Brian O'Connor; Karen Cwirka for Janice Perkins, ConnectiCare; Louis Polzella, CT Department of Social Services (DSS); Tony Rescigno, Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce; Victoria Veltri, Office of the Healthcare Advocate; Teresa C. Younger, Permanent Commission on the Status on Women.

Members Absent: Evelyn Barnum, Community Health Center Association of Connecticut; Bob Dakers, OPM; Ken Ferrucci, Connecticut State Medical Society; Margaret Flinter, Community Health Center, Inc.; Stephen Frayne, Connecticut Hospital Association; Mark Schaefer, DSS; Michelle Zettergren, Connecticare.

Other Participants: Representative Susan Johnson; David Guttchen, OPM; Barbara Parks Wolf, OPM.

Introductions

The meeting of the Health Insurance Planning Grant Committee was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Jeannette DeJesús, Special Advisor to the Governor on Health Care Reform, introduced new members: Jamesina Henderson, Executive Director of the Cornell Scott-Hill Health Corporation; Victoria Veltri, Healthcare Advocate in the Office of the Healthcare Advocate; and Teresa Younger, Executive Director of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

Vendor Selection Process

Tia Cintron provided an update on the vendor selection process for the research and market analysis. Six high quality proposals were received. The proposal review team has recommended a finalist and grant contract negotiations are in progress. There are 11 main topics to be addressed in the scope of work:

1. Assessment of the uninsured and underinsured population in Connecticut.
2. Survey and analysis of the current insurance market.
3. Survey and analysis of the small employer market.
4. Analysis of economic and actuarial models.
5. Analysis of the large group employer market participation in the Exchange
6. Analysis of the impact of other health system initiatives on the Exchange.
7. Development of a financial model for the Exchange to achieve sustainability.
8. Assessment of the technical requirements and specifications for Exchange accounting and financial system functions.
9. Assessment of the existing Medicaid eligibility system and identify interface issues and necessary requirements for integration with the Exchange IT infrastructure.
10. Impact study of the Medicaid program on the Exchange specifically addressing the areas of enrollment change and associated costs, analysis of the federal poverty level increase, and impact to CHIP.

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11. Analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of a Connecticut statewide Exchange versus a multi-state Exchange.

Public Engagement

Tia described efforts to engage the public in discussions about the design and establishment of a state Exchange and thanked the group for their feedback on the process and questionnaire. Public forums have been scheduled for Danbury, New London, New Haven, Hartford, and Windham. Details of a sixth forum in Bridgeport are being finalized and a revised press release will be distributed to reflect this. On April 25 and 27 forums were held in Danbury and New London, respectively. Attendance was modest. To help publicize the remaining forums, Planning Committee members were requested to help publicize these events and assist with outreach. Tia provided copies of materials related to the forums: Slides from the presentation, one pager describing Exchanges (which is also available in Spanish), and the evaluation form.

In addition to public forums, nine stakeholder meetings have been set up to date and more may be scheduled. A handout listing the meetings and participants was provided.

Teresa Younger requested that the time and location of the stakeholder meetings be posted on the website. David Guttchen noted that grant funds are being used to hire a facilitator for the stakeholder meetings and the discussions will be summarized and incorporated into a document that will go to the Planning Committee for review and comment.

Innovator Grant

Tia provided an update on the Innovator grant for the design and implementation of the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure needed to operate Health Insurance Exchanges. Connecticut is part of a consortium of New England states that were awarded this grant. The kick off meeting will occur in a week. A total of seven innovator grants were awarded across the states: Kansas, Maryland, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Wisconsin, and the New England multi-state consortium led Massachusetts that includes Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Maine. All Early Innovator states have committed to assuring that the technology they develop is reusable and transferable so that all states will benefit and will not need to each start from scratch.

Establishment Grant

David Guttchen described the Establishment grants which provide a two tier approach to continued funding for the establishment of state Exchanges. These federal grants are designed to give state flexibility in meeting Exchange development requirements. Level One funding supports additional planning and research efforts to fully prepare states for Level Two funding, which supports the implementation and operation of the Exchange through December 31, 2014. Many states are looking to apply for Level One for bridge funding and then apply for Level Two. The opportunity to apply for funding occurs on a quarterly basis until March 2012.

Jeannette DeJesús asked David what types of activities can these grant funds be used for. David explained that the federal government requires that all funding must be directly related to the development of the Exchange.

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Legislation

David Guttchen provided an update on legislative activity related to the Exchange. There are currently three Exchange bills: SB 921 (OPM's bill), HB 6323 (Speaker Donovan's bill), and SB 1204 (Senator Williams' bill). All three bills have successfully passed out of their committees of origin and have been issued a file copy. SB 1204 is the only bill that was referred to the Appropriations Committee because of the fiscal note attached related to the establishment of a Basic Health Program that is outside of the Exchange. The expectation is that there will be compromise and one final bill will emerge. Without a bill, Connecticut will not be able to apply for the Level Two Establishment grant. Also, if the Exchange Authority is not in place this summer, Connecticut will not be positioned to meet the aggressive timelines to put an Exchange in place by January 2014.

Jim Augur asked about the amount of funding that is available. David explained that Connecticut currently has approximately \$1 million for the existing Planning Grant. For Level One and Two funding, there is no cap on funding. A big challenge for states is to figure out what it will cost to operate an Exchange. This assumption is that the General Fund is not going to fund the Exchange.

Discussion

Jeannette informed the group that Secretary Berwick of the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) spent Monday, April 27th in Connecticut along with Senator John Larson. They spent the morning with individuals from across the state representing both the public and private sectors and Secretary Berwick was very impressed with the level of commitment and collaboration in Connecticut.

Tia noted that HHS has complemented Connecticut on its stakeholder process, an activity that the Planning Committee has played a role in, and asked that Connecticut do a presentation on this for other states.

Representative Susan Johnson announced that she plans to video tape the Windham public hearing and make it accessible on the local Cable TV public access channel.

Tia noted that despite issuing a press release using the Governor's press contacts, display advertising in regional and minority papers, radio PSAs and letters to town selectman and mayors, the response for the Public Forums has been modest. Phil Boyle mentioned that he was at the Danbury public forum and agreed that the topic was technical, but thought that the Exchange grant team did a great job.

Jim Augur asked if there was anything else the Planning Committee could be doing at this point. Tia responded that members can spread the word about the public forums and to encourage people to fill out the exchange questionnaires.

Next Steps

Tia told the Planning Committee that the next meeting would be scheduled after some of the milestones have been met by the research contractor to discuss some research and analysis.